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Toxic site no threat, says EPA

By ROBERT SCARDACI

REPORTER CORRESPONDENT

The toxic waste site at the former Hamilton Industrial Park, 833 Hamilton Blvd., poses no health hazard at all to the local community, says Mayor Daniel Gallagher.

There are six locations on the site where toxic materials were found buried. The substances found were lead, cadmium and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). If exposed to human and wild life, these toxins are considered very dangerous.

There are an estimated 15 commercial businesses operating at the Hamilton Industrial Park. The property is unsecured, except for a fenced-in area, where a truck driving school operated until it closed down in October 1996. A recent report from the federal En-

vironmental Protection Agency (EPA) names Cornell Dubilier, an electronics company which operated at the site from 1938 until 1962, as the main environmental culprit.

Cornell Dubilier is reported to have tested for former oils at the site prior to its relocation. The EPA report said that the firm is alleged to have dumped PCB-contaminated materials and other hazardous substances directly into the site soils. It was the discovery of high levels of PCBs at the site which led the South Plainfield zoning board to revoke the operating permit of the truck driving school.

Richard Cahill, an EPA spokesman, said he agrees with Mayor Gallagher's comments and said the site is not an overall threat to the community.

"The real danger is direct exposure to the material on the site," Mr. Cahill said.

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Site not a threat

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He also said the EPA plans to restrict access to the area and will continue to investigate the levels of contamination there. The EPA is also planning to have the area paved. The cost of cleaning up the site will be the responsibility of Cornell-Dubilier and DSC Enter-

prises of Newark, the current owner of the property.

Mr. Cahill said both companies have been issued orders indicating their liability for any cases of contamination. Both firms are to present the EPA with their plans to restrict access to the site within a week, Mr. Cahill said.